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Cuban-American Spanish revisited: sociolinguistic and pragmatic peculiarities

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Abstract: This article describes the sociolinguistic traits of Cuban-American Spanish, especially in south Florida. By revising already-built corpora and dictionaries, the study aims at examining the correlation between linguistic borrowing, and sociocultural and pragmatic elements in an attempt to shed more light on the concepts of Spanglish and code-switching. This revision is complemented by a historical account of Cuban-American migration, a normative study of this dialectal Spanish variant, and the collection of indigenous multiword phrases. Some of the earlier findings indicate that Cuban-American Spanish reflects the variability of this form of Spanglish as its usage and conventions are highly reliant on the pragmatic features of Cuban-American Spanish speakers. Culturally speaking, Miami-based Spanish reveals the existence of a differentiating sentiment, which contrasts with the inevitably assimilated American codes, i.e. a strong sense of bicultural identity.

Keywords: Cuban-American Spanish, sociolinguistics, code-switching, Spanglish, pragmatics

1 Introduction

The constant exposure of Cuban Spanish to English is expectedly more tangible in Cuban-American communities, especially in the South of Florida. Code-switching implies the non-stop diachronic adaptation of English linguistic patterning into Spanish, and the assurance of *Spanglish* as a resulting construct of sociolinguistic and cultural elements, which is why it has been defined in a variety of ways: “as a pidgin, or creole language; an interlanguage; or an Anglicized Spanish language” (Neuliep 2015, 105).

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This empirical article is intended to provide a comprehensive dia-synchronic analysis on the sociolinguistic traits Cuban-American Spanish (CAS) is characterized by. Thus, the phenomena of Spanglish and code-switching are necessarily defined and examined. This empirical account is also aimed at examining how reliant linguistic loans are on social and cultural traits through a comprehensive analysis of linguistic borrowings. A sociolinguistic revision of this kind might shed some light on the conventions and practices of Spanglish, and the tenets of code-switching and tag-switching.

Therefore, this analysis has been divided into various sections, which are conceived to provide global insights of this dialectal language. Sections 2 and 3 are devoted to a historical account of this community and some general theoretical backgrounds of the phenomena of code-switching and bilingualism. Sections 4 and 5 are intended to discern overall lexical and syntactic features of CAS, based on previous studies and corpora. Section 6 recaps the pragmatic uniqueness of CAS by examining multiword phrases, extracted from Cuban Spanish dictionaries.

2 Cuban-Americans: a brief historical and socio-cultural account

Cuban migration to the United States is not a current phenomenon. It started in the nineteenth century, in which the earliest Cuban-American communities were Florida-based, especially in Tampa and Key West. These cities still possess nowadays an array of nineteenth-century migrants' memorabilia.

In the 1870s, about 12,000 Cubans settled down in the US: 4,500 in New York, 3,000 in New Orleans, 2,000 in Key West (*Cayo Hueso* in Spanish), and 2,000 in the rest of the country (Poyo 1991, 24). The rapidly-growing cigar industry in the South of the US fostered the migration influxes to Floridian enclaves, in which a total of twenty thousand Cubans were recorded in the 1890s. "Cigar Production transformed the local economy of a score of communities across Florida. More than 170 factories were operating in Key West by the late 1880s, employing approximately 7,500 workers. Key West grew from a population of less than seven hundred residents in 1840 to more than eighteen thousand by 1890 as the value of its cigar manufactures soared from twenty million dollars in 1882 to one hundred million dollars in 1892" (Pérez 2008, 31). A significant impact of the solid Cuban community was that migration forged Cuban identity, and brought to light cultural traits and social standards.

Throughout the Neocolonial period (1902–1959), the United States continued being the favorite destination of most Cuban migrants, especially for the Cuban

bourgeoisie. Most upper social class families would send their children over to study in prestigious American universities. The number of Cuban migrants totaled 83,594 by 1930. Due to the harsh economic situation in the 1950s, the number of Cuban settlers soared: it is estimated that about one hundred thousand Cubans left for the US between 1950 and 1958. This situation might have influenced the American government to demand travel visas to Cuban citizens, breaking thus the free movement policy agreed upon by both governments in 1945 (Arbeloya Cervera 2013, 21).

Nevertheless, in 1961, after the diplomatic break between both countries, migration turned into a political, economic and cultural element of greater significance. A number of migration "waves" have been witnessed since then: the first exodus occurred between 1959 and 1962 (*los volveremos*),[1] the second one between 1965 and 1972 (*los renaceremos*),[2] the third one in 1980 (*los marielitos*),[3] and the fourth one in 1994 (*los balseros*).[4] The Cuban Refugee Program and the Cuban Adjustment Act, issued in 1961 and 1966 respectively, have allowed the access to medical service, pensions, university degree validation, and in general, the adaptation of Cuban migrants to the new reality (Arboleya Cervera 2013, 37). Those fleeing the country in the first two "waves" were the so-called *exilio histórico* (historical exile), which is occasionally distinguished from the migrants in the latest "waves" described: *nuevos emigrados* (new emigrés).

According to PEW Research Center (2012), by 2010 there were a total of 1,884,000 people of Cuban origin living in the US, fifty-nine percent of which are migrants (fifty-two percent of them arrived after 1990, and the rest were born in that country). This number is crucial to understand the sentiment of belonging that characterized the *new emigrés*. It became ingrained in them to keep in touch with the relatives on the island, which is highly perceptible in the number of yearly trips, family remittance, etc.

The generational complexity of the emigrés in the long-established Cuban community is one of the historical features to take into consideration. These social differences have remarkably influenced the linguistic variations in the Cuban-American variant of Spanish.

Historically, the term *Cuban-Americans* has conveyed a long-existing ambiguity. As expected, it should make reference to the US-born citizens, or Cubans

1 This appellative makes reference to their wishes to return to Cuba.

2 This appellative denotes those who fled Cuba in an attempt to stay for a longer period of time. They never forgot Cuba, and they were prone to start from scratch (Varela 1992, 13).

3 They were known for leaving the country through the Mariel boatlift. *Mariel* is an important harbor in the north of Havana region.

4 They were famously known for migrating on home-made rafts.

who have naturalized as US citizens; however, it is widely used nowadays to call any Cuban migrant living in the US, which makes statistics less precise and less fine-grained. What is reasonably obvious is that Cuban-American-*ness* has resulted from the integration and adaptation of Cuban identity and cultural traits to the American society and standards, i.e. the national and ethnic components tend to reaffirm due to the inexistence of a well-defined nucleus, whose tendency is to assimilate all these features (Arboleya Cervera 2013, 77). Therefore, Cuban-Americans undergo "a process of bi-cultural identity" (García 1996, 27), which depicts the nearness of two identities and their linguistic codes.

Up to the twentieth century, Cuban identity or nationality was clearly expressed in the national territory. This tendency changed after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, whereby the feeling of Cuban-*ness* transcended beyond the island's borders, especially to South Florida. Cuban-Americans were responsible for transmitting their culture and identity at a social scale outside Cuba.

The condition of being Cuban-American confirms Cuban cultural roots inasmuch as these find a distinctive space within the American society. This adaptation process is accompanied by a fresher way of expressing their identity or nationality, resulting from the existential need of emigrés and their descendants (Arboleya Cervera 2013, 81). Consequently, a category of Cuban culture is born: it is likely to melt and assimilate American values and social traits (customs, English language, aspirations, etc.). This new category is certainly affecting the concept of Cuban nationality and identity, by taking on elements of acculturation in a foreign country. "To maintain a sense of *cubanidad* meant to preserve those customs, values and traditions that they associated with being Cuban, and the emigrés created numerous cultural associations to promote and reinforce these values in exile" (García 1996, 83).

The city of Miami (Miami-Dade County) turned out to be the preferred settlement where cultural boundaries have been historically toned up. "Census figures showed that 299,217 Cubans lived in Dade County in 1979, but by 1980 the number had almost doubled to 581,030, and more than fifty-two percent of 803,226 Cubans in the United States lived in Miami—Ft. Lauderdale area alone; the only city with a larger population was Havana" (ib., 84). Cuban-Americans living in Miami have ensured their cultural and linguistic survival by differentiating instead of assimilating. Both antagonistic processes were thus complementary, by and large. The differentiating process necessarily led to the assertion of Cuban identity and the keeping with traditions and customs. On the other hand, assimilating newer cultural patterns guarantees the assimilation of American cultural, social and linguistic codes into the well-established Cuban-American community.

The transference of these traits was even more locally palpable in certain neighborhoods in Miami, which exemplifies the idea of geographically congre-

gated communities. "Little Havana", especially in the areas of Flager Street and Southwest 8th Street, is where this differentiating process is most visible. The neighborhood of Hialeah is known for its working class inhabitants, and it has been typically called "Little Marianao", named after a Western area in Havana of equal social characteristics. "Little Havana, however, remained the symbolic center of the exile community in south Florida and in the United States" (ib., 86).

Culturally speaking, the Miami-based community has ensured a solid Hispanic (chiefly Cuban) tradition. This expected process was a consequence of: (1) a powerful Spanish-speaking mass media (*Telemundo*, *Univisión*, *América TeVe*, *CNN en Español*); (2) the ever-increasing public events, in which Spanish is fundamental (plays, concerts, movie festivals, conferences, etc.); (3) the celebration of an array of religious, civic or festive activities (López Morales 2003, 123).

One distinctive feature of the differentiating mechanism undergone by the Cuban-Americans, especially in south Florida, was the mélange of *native* cultural and social traits and Cuban imported icons. In Miami, it is not uncommon to find fast-food restaurants and Cuban food establishments at the same frequency; houses devoting shrines to Afro-Cuban *santería*, next to Christmas decorations; an array of Cuban products, some of which were already extinct on the island: *malta Hatuey*, *café Estrella*, *galletas Wajay*. Spanish is unprecedentedly far more common than English, which made it easier for those non-English speakers not to feel isolated from the community. English was no longer necessary, but certain words or expressions were, especially to communicate with their English-speaking American-born descendants and some non-Hispanic members of the community. This urge to assimilate some words is precisely what has brought about the high degree of permeability of the language.

Widening the concept of Cuban-*ness* involves the indispensable study of both social groups (or communities). They reflect an unprecedented *intralinguistic code-switching*, whereby an assurance of cultural and linguistic contact is perceived. Both communities have been exposed to American English at different extents, and their timings and momentums seem to have played a fundamental role in the features acquired as to productivity and frequency.

3 The concept of Spanglish

3.1 Definitions

The linguistic and cultural contact phenomena witnessed in Spanish-speaking enclaves such as south Florida, or the Mexican border, has originated a profound

transculturation process, and the spread of Spanish dialects, often categorized as *Spanglish*. A number of scholars have studied this linguistic singularity from a sociolinguistic perspective (Tío 1954, 1992; Varela 1992; Castro 1996; Betanzos Palacios 2001; López Morales 2003; Stavans 2004).

A significant feature of Spanglish is the number of opponents it has incited. One of the earliest scholars to warn us of its dangers was Salvador Tío (1954, 60), who is widely known for coining the term *Spanglish* in a Puerto Rican newspaper column. He insisted on his disbelief in Latin and bilingualism because Latin was a dead language, and bilingualism implied the death of two languages. As to the Puerto Rican variant of Spanish again, Nash (1970, 223s.) recognizes the substantial number of speakers of Spanglish, and describes it as a one-level borrowing, since it retains the phonological, morphological, and syntactic structure of Puerto Rican Spanish, but its vocabulary is mostly English-derived (Lipski 2004, 2). Other critics, such as the journalist González-Echeverría (1997), relates the emergence of such a fused construct with the socio-cultural backgrounds of speakers:

> "Spanglish, the composite language of Spanish and English that has crossed over from the street to Hispanic talk shows and advertising campaigns, poses a grave danger to Hispanic culture and to the advancement of Hispanics in mainstream America. Those who condone and even promote it as a harmless commingling do not realize that this is hardly a relationship based on equality. Spanglish is an invasion of Spanish by English. The sad reality is that Spanglish is primarily the language of poor Hispanics, many barely literate in either language. They incorporate English words and constructions into their daily speech because they lack the vocabulary and education in Spanish to adapt to the changing culture around them. Educated Hispanics who do likewise have a different motivation: Some are embarrassed by their background and feel empowered by using English words and directly translated English idioms. Doing so, they think, is to claim membership in the mainstream. Politically, however, Spanglish is a capitulation; it indicates marginalization, not enfranchisement".

The attitude towards Spanglish is in conjunction with earlier stances on linguistic borrowing. Interlanguage and code-switching are necessarily involved when two cultures, identities, and obviously, languages come into contact. Denying the emergence of Spanglish as a means of communication is denying the natural evolution of a language, due to its valuable communicative significance in a given social group. As stated by Rothman/Rell (2005, 516), "what some have labeled a 'gutter language', others coin a 'dynamic fusion' of crashing cultures noticeably merging at the interface of language".

Spanglish exists where Americans and Spanish speakers live together. The word is found in dictionaries with solely linguistic senses: "Spanish characterized by numerous borrowings from English" (TAHD s.v.), "a type of Spanish

contaminated by English words and forms of expression, spoken in Latin America" (OED s.v.), "Spanish marked by numerous borrowings from English" (MWD s.v.). These lexicographical works disclose the fact that this variant is the product of linguistic "contamination" and borrowing, but do not make reference to the sociolinguistic nature of the process. Put simply, Spanglish could be defined as the way "the Spanish speaker has taken those English words whose meaning is understood and, simply, has *Hispanized* them; the same is done with verbal forms and with such hybrids, some approximation to communication in the other language will be achieved" (cf. Betanzos Palacios 2001; translated by Lipski 2004).

What has been repeatedly referred to is the number of variants across the US. This occurrence entails the emergence of small speech communities, which have in common the need of eliminating any obstacle to communication, and of re-inventing the linguistic adaptation of Spanish-speakers and US-born migrants in the new bilingual scenario. "We must acknowledge that New York Spanglish has little to do with its Los Angeles counterpart. Therefore we are not speaking of a single language but rather of a group of dialects as varied as the speech communities it represents" (Castro 1996; translated by Lipski 2004).

Therefore, these regional varieties are easy to spot due to the background of speakers, the city they live in, age, etc. Thus, a number of varieties can be found: *Nuyorrican* (Puerto Rican Spanish in New York), *Dominicanish* (Dominican Spanish in Florida), *Cubonics* (Cuban Spanish in south Florida), and so forth. Cubonics, as any other form of Spanglish, is particularly commonplace in the homes of Cuban families in which the children are US-born or are educated in America. There exist distinct peculiarities among speakers of English, Spanish, or Spanglish. They all represent a continuum of language acquisition. A US-bred Cuban is obviously more prone to bilingualism, and their Spanish denotes the highest degree of English *intrusiveness* of all. Older generations of Cubans, especially non-English speakers, chiefly resort to adapted loanwords, or calques, to facilitate their social and parental communication: *deiquer* < *Day Care*, *biliar* < *billing*, *soda*, *la orden* < *the* (*restaurant*) *order*, etc.

These latest sociolinguistic variations have been correlated in a diagram (Fig. 1) to explain how Spanglish is dependent on speakers' individuality, and their linguistic alternations are linked with communicative functionality of social and generational groups. The following diagram (Toribio 2015, 536) depicts the range of speakers: "from the recently arrived immigrant with incipient knowledge of English (S_e), through the near-native speaker of English or Spanish (SE, ES), to a third-generation heritage speaker of Spanish who retains minimal Spanish-language abilities (E_s)".

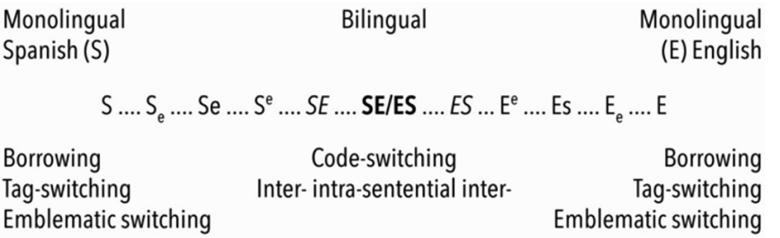

Fig. 1: Diagram showing the continuum between speakers and contact speech forms (Source: Toribio 2015, 536).

One of the most relevant features described in the diagram above shows the relation between the processes of code switching, and that of borrowing, tag-switching and emblematic switching. The former is proportional to the degree of bilingualism attested, whereas the latter ones are mostly perceived at the word level. A number of sociolinguists (Poplack 1981; McClure 1981; Zentella 1997) share the belief that code-switching is chiefly associated with US contexts in which English and Spanish have been exposed greatly, and that monolingual norms are generally relaxed in such contexts.

This multifaceted process is especially significant in Cuban family members. These cohorts are characterized by being multigenerational, and by conveying various levels of English. The degree of bilingualism, the processes of code-switching, tag-switching, and borrowing are mostly dependent on their exposure to the language, their age, their educational level, their home place, etc.

3.2 Code-switching and Spanglish: why are they resorted to?

The study of the code-switching process and the existence of Poplack's regular switching points (1983) have led to a variety of researches, aimed at not only providing a normative analysis of the interlinguistic code, but also ascertaining its causes.

One of the most remarkable research papers consulted was written by Appel/Muysken (2005), whose attempt to decipher the origins of code-switching relies on the functional framework of Jakobson (1960). According to their survey, the following functions can be found in the switching process:

1. Referential: switching can be of use to the referential function because "it involves lack of knowledge of one language or lack of facility in that language on a certain subject" (Appel/Muysken 2005, 118). In other words, bilingual

speakers switch languages because they feel more comfortable when referring to certain concepts in a specific language, or presumably because the referent does not exist in one of the languages. One example is the word *güarajita* < *water heater* in Cuban American Spanish, which has a Cuban Spanish counterpart: *calentador de agua*. These two referents are similar but not exactly the same: *güarajita* denotes a state-of-the-art home appliance used to heat up the tap or shower water whenever it is necessary, whereas *calentador de agua* only refers to the shower (or a bucket) and its use is more limited. Hence, Miami-based speakers of Spanish clearly differentiate these two referents by resorting to unlike signifiers.

2. Directive: switching serves this type of function in that it involves the hearer directly. Speakers may opt to include or exclude hearers of the conversation by switching to a specific language they are conscious of. Appel/Muysken (ib., 119) refer to the instance in which immigrant parents speak their native language to each other to stop their children from understanding what is being said.
3. Expressive: this function has also been described by Poplack (1981), and it denotes a mixed identity through the use of both contact languages. A discourse full of code-switching instances becomes a mode of speech itself.
4. Phatic: switching might lead to a change in tone of the conversation, i.e. phatic function. A clear-cut example is when stand-up comedians tell their jokes in a standard variety of the language, but the punch line is said in a vernacular type of speech (Appel/Muysken 2005, 119).
5. Metalinguistic: switching is resorted to comment directly or indirectly in the languages involved. This is widely seen on Miami-based television, in which journalists or hosts switch languages constantly to come across clearer to their guests or interviewees.
6. Poetic: switching is intended to make use of bilingual puns, jokes, or any metaphorical tropes to grab viewers or hearers' attention. The combination of both languages' stylistic devices is understandable in publicity: *frisky frolic perros* (Negueruela Azarola 2010, 96), in which dog-shaped toys are sold. The English names are kept for phonological reasons (alliteration), translation would be too lettering, and bilingual children are aware of both linguistic codes.

It is obvious that only proficient speakers of the language are capable of using a wider range of these functions within the utterance. And more than one type of switching could be found. What seems really reasonable is that those who switch most are precisely those speakers who switch in the middle of an utterance (Appel/Muysken 2005, 120).

Likewise, Silva-Corvalán (2001, 315–317; cited by López Morales 2003, 197–199) groups the types of code-switching, in terms of their syntactic and pragmatic functionality. According to her classification, there are three comprehensive types: 1) intention to quote an utterance literally (also stated by Toribio 2015, 539), as in "La pobre mujer se decía: '*What's wrong with me?*', y yo solo pude contestarle…"; 2) willingness to encode emotions, and stress them in the speech, such as "*Wow*. Todo está buenísimo. *I'm so happy!*"; 3) the use of rhetorical or expressive function in the utterance, as in "*Why, I questioned myself, did I have to daily portray myself as a* neogringo cuando mi realidad tenía más sangre y pasión?" (the examples are entirely provided by Silva-Corvalán 2001).

What seems recognizable is that "code-switching is always a conscious choice on the part of the speaker" (Toribio 2015, 539), and their origin relies on pragmatic functions. These aforementioned classifications show that communicative intentionality of intralinguistic languages is soundly different from that of standard ones. The existence of two languages, or codes, in contact denotes a higher complexity of the phenomenon, which involves both ethnographic and discourse analyses.

The fact is that Spanglish is not merely a bilingual communicative act. It does imply relatively consistent linguistic mechanisms, resulting from fairly predictable lexico-syntactical algorithms and shifting cognitive-pragmatic acts. In other words, as López García-Molins (2015, 104) puts it, it is the reflection of a mind storing two languages, and keeping a cortical inventory of lexemes with two possibilities of phonological expression (compound bilingualism), as well as doublets of lexemes related in both English and Spanish (coordinated bilingualism), which are in conjunction with two alternative inventories of grammar patterns. This configuration is completed by a specific discursive tendency, which means that Spanglish speakers overstep grammatical frontiers conveying phenomena that become habitual.

4 Lexical borrowing

The oft-quoted loanwords are easy to study qualitatively and quantitatively, and they represent the visible process of lexical transference or borrowing that takes place between two languages in contact.

In his corpus-driven article *Los cubanos de Miami*, López Morales (2003, 174s.) identifies the lexical borrowings, and groups them according to their semantic or lexical variations. Some of the loanwords (non-adapted) found are: *background*, *downtown*, *file*, *marketing*, *OK*, *part-time*, *teenager*, etc. There exists

another group of borrowings, earlier coined as adapted loanwords, which are characterized by possessing an English morpheme and a Spanish derivational suffix attached: *parquear*, *chequear*, *lisar*, *lonchar* derived from the verbs *to park*, *to check*, *to lease*, and *to lunch* respectively. Likewise, the number of hybrid borrowings culled was scarce: *manager general*, *dinero standing* and *compañía de retail*. Without doubt, a relevant finding of this study is how these loanwords are distributed according to the origin of poll-takers. The number of CAS loanwords was 680, and the distribution of usage (in percentages): those who are 18 years old or over (20.8%), between 17 and 7 (21.3%), and 6 or under (32%).

As for the process of calquing, López Morales (ib., 176) ascertains a group of literal translations: *compulsorio* < *compulsory*, *locación* < *location*, *retiro* < *retirement*, *consumerismo* < *consumerism*, *honores* < *honors*, *plomero* < *plumber*, *buldoza* < *bulldozer*, *estudio* < *studio* [apartment], *carro* < *car*, *a tiempo completo* < *full time*, *a tiempo parcial* < *part time*, *población* < *population*, *controversial*, etc. Interestingly, some of the calques annotated are not merely Miami-based, they already existed in the Cuban variant of Spanish: *retiro*, *buldózer* or *buldoza*, *plomero*, *carro*, *a tiempo completo*, *a tiempo parcial*, etc.

A considerable number of calques, the so-called "semantic loans", have also been studied and attested. These lexical units already existed in Cuban Spanish but another sense is added to their semantic structure. These calques, highly *intrusive* and linguistically *clashing*, result from coincidental graphemes and phonemes in both languages.

In Table 1 below, a brief description of these semantically calqued units is provided. The elements annotated (*aplicación*, *asistente*, *confidente*, *embarazado*, *envolver*, *introducer*, *oír*, *posición*) exist in the recipient language (CAS) and they coexist with other senses of the words: *confidente* (1) 'a confident', and *confidente* (2) 'having confidence'. These lexical units are clearly differentiated not only through their syntax functions (1 → noun; 2 → adjective) but also through their etymological nature: the former is clearly a native noun whereas the second one is the product of meaning extension. These semantic loans have also a common feature: they coexist with native lexemes: *aplicación*/*solicitud*, *asistente*/*ayudante*, *asistir*/*ayudar*, *confidente*/*confiado*, *embarazado*/*avergonzado*, *envolver*/*implicar*, *introducir*/*presentar*, *oír*/*saber*, *posición*/*puesto*.

Table 1: Some semantic loans in Cuban-American Spanish (Source: López Morales 2003, 176–178)

Semantic Loan	English Paronym	New sense in Spanish	Context
aplicación	*application*	request, petition	'rellenar la aplicación para solicitar el visado'
asistente	*assistant*	helping person at an office, school, etc.	'te presento a la asistente del Doctor Ramírez'
confidente	*confident*	having confidence	'siempre he estado confidente con el sistema escolar''
embarazado(*a*)	*embarrassed*	feeling shame	'siempre que me hablaba, me sentía embarazado'
envolver	*to involve*	to be associated with something or someone	'mi jefe no quiso envolverse en mi problema'
introducir	*to introduce*	to cause to be acquainted	'ella quiso introducirme en la fiesta pero yo me negué'
oír	*to hear* (*from*)	to receive communication	'no he oído de ella desde hace dos semanas'
posición	*position*	an employment for which someone has been hired	'ya no trabaja de vendedor; tiene una posición más alta'

When dealing with phraseology and Cuban-American Spanish, the concept of *Cubonics* should be necessarily studied. It has been traditionally related to the Cuban people's influence and verve in the area of Miami-Dade, and the way English speakers, non-English speakers have come across an interlinguistic means to guarantee communication and language grasp. "Cubonics" is applied to phonological, morphological, or syntactic variations occurring in both contact languages: from pronunciation adaptations (/eslai/ < *slice*) to loan creations (*el pollo del viejito* < *KFC*) or semantic loans due to a morphological fusion of phrase components (*papayón*[5] < *Papa John's Pizza*, *la casina* < *lacquer thinner*). The lexical units *papayón* and *la casina* exist in Cuban Spanish with the meaning of 'female genitalia' and 'small house' respectively. Their fusion is motivated by the adaptation of phonemes and morphemes into already existing elements to ease their pronunciation and usage. Hilarity is clearly seen in the examples given.

5 This word is also a vulgar lemma, used to denote women's reproductive organs. Thus, hilarity is once again behind the process of word adaptation.

Nevertheless, the singularity of *Cubonics* relies on the calquing of Cuban phraseology and their usage in both Cuban-American Spanish and Cuban-American English. They can be hybrids, or loan renditions (*for las flies* 'just in case' < *por las moscas*), or loan translations (*I don't care a whistle* 'I don't give a hoot' < *No me importa un pito*). Loan translations are obviously more frequent among English speakers. These calqued utterances are the construct of a long-existing process of cultural assimilation, and these forms of borrowing are by far the most visible linguistic *totems*.

Table 2: Some *Cubonics* found in Cuban-American English, particularly in the area of Miami-Dade (Source: Author)

Cuban Spanish Saying	Cubonics	English meaning
estar comiendo de lo que pica el pollo	*to be eating what the chicken nibbles*	'to be wasting one's time in foolish things'
estar acabando	*to be finishing*	'to be a big success'
ser un arroz con mango	*to be rice with mango*	'to be a complicated situation'
ser la pata del diablo	*to be the devil's leg*	'to be naughty'
este huevo quiere sal	*this egg wants salt*	'he/she has hidden intentions'
no disparar ni un chícharo	*not to shoot a pea*	'to be lazy'
caminar con los codos	*to walk with the elbows*	'to be stingy'
cantar el manicero	*to sing the peanut vendor*	'to die'

4.1 Nouns: gender and number inflections

Assigning gender to new loanwords in CAS does not vary much from Cuban Spanish, and could be summarized according to the following observations (Varela 1992, 73–75):

a. If loanwords are animate nouns, gender is assigned according to the state of being masculine or feminine. Inflectional suffixes *-a* or *-o* are attached to the bases, or merely articles *la* or *el* are resorted to when inflection is not admitted:
el bos or *la bosa* < *the boss*
el interpretor or *la interpretora* < *the interpreter*
el bróder < *the brother*

la waifa < *the wife*
el mánacher or *la mánacher* < *the manager*
el principal or *la principal* < *the principal*

b. If loanwords are inanimate, gender assignment is not as precise as the previous category. It mostly depends on the ending graphemes of nouns: if it is *-a*, feminine gender is assigned, and if it is *-o*, masculine:
la chingola[6] < *the shin guard*
la Sagüesera < *Southwest area*
el flató < *flat top* (special hair design)
el mapo < *the mop*

Generally, when borrowings end in consonants or vowels *-e* or *-u*, they are assigned with masculine gender:
el daime < *the dime*
el tomcrú < the *thumbscrew*

At times, the assignment might be the result of a grammatical borrowing of gender from Spanish into English. The transference of masculine or feminine category implies that gender is not always grapheme- or phoneme-motivated, but semantically calqued. This feature might have repercussions on the article used, and/or Spanish inflectional suffixes:
la baquería < *the bakery* (in Spanish, *la panadería*)
la estorma < *the storm* (in Spanish, *la tormenta*)
el turnamento < *the tournament* (in Spanish, *el torneo*)
el rufo < *the roof* (in Spanish, *el techo*)

c. Loanwords ending in *-er* are generally assigned with feminine assignment, due to a consideration of schwa sound as a lower central vowel, closer to *-a* (Sánchez 1982, 34):
la corna < *the corner*
la cuora < *the quarter*
la jira < *the heater*
la rula < *the ruler*

However, other examples do not comply with this generalization:
el blúmer < *the bloomers* (in Spanish, *las bragas*)

6 It is *chingala* in Cuban Spanish.

el clíner < *the cleaner* (in Spanish, *el tintorero*)
el dráyer < *the dryer* (in Spanish, *el secador*)
el chágüer < *the shower* (in Spanish, *el aguacero* or *la fiesta*)

Interestingly, some particular cases of loans, those retaining the signifier but borrowing a new sense in Spanish, i.e. semantic loans, are found highly consistent, since the Spanish forms keep their native gender category: *la carpeta* (originally meaning 'file' in Spanish) < *the carpet*, *la lectura* (originally meaning 'reading' in Spanish) < *the lecture*, *los parientes* (originally meaning 'relatives' in Spanish) < *the parents*, etc. (Varela 1992, 76). This type of loans, though not so frequent as signifier-oriented ones, is a recognized source of homonymy and polysemy in CAS, and more likely a generational disruption in bilingual contexts. Older generations are distinctly more inclined to avoid these loaned forms, as opposed to bilingual and bi-cultural younger generations.

As per plurality assignment, this category mostly depends on the ending phonemes or graphemes of loanwords. In the main, those nouns ending in consonants can take *-es* (*baipás* < *bypass* → *baipases*, *suéter* < *sweater* → *suéteres*) or *-s* (*blúmer* < *bloomer* → *blúmers*, *club* → *clubs*). Occasionally, ending consonant sounds, inexistent in Spanish, are not kept, leading to the exposure of vowel sounds in final position. This sound assimilation brings about the use of *-s* suffix to form plural forms: *tique* < *ticket* → *tiques*, *flató* < *flat top* → *flatós*. The addition of vowel sounds is also resorted to facilitate the pronunciation of borrowed units: *lonche* < *lunch* → *lonches*, *filme* < *film* → *filmes*. This grapheme attachment eases plurality greatly but its origin relies on the difficulty in pronouncing such ending consonant sounds by Spanish speakers.

4.2 Adjectives

Like loaned adjectives in Cuban Spanish, CAS ones are also rarely borrowed. Beatriz Varela (1992, 83–85) lists a total of 55 in her corpus, in which she identifies the types of borrowing (loanword, calque, or semantic loan) and their etymologies: *alegado* < *alleged*, *atachado* < *attached*, *beneficial*, *conservativo* < *conservative*, *disabilitado* < *disabled*, *disatisfecho* < *dissatisfied*, *frizado* < *to freeze*,[7] *isolado*

7 In this case, *frizado* is not entirely derived from an adjective, but else the verb *to freeze*. One reason to explain this is the existence of the word *frozen* in Cuban Spanish and Cuban-American Spanish, meaning a type of ice-cream. To avoid sense ambiguity, the former is somehow preferred.

< *isolated*, *obsesado* < *obsessed*, *peruviano* < *Peruvian*, *remarkable*, *soportivo* < *supportive*, *taipeado* < *typed*, *terrífico* < *terrific*, etc.

A few examples on adjective-order variations are worth mentioning, especially in which these forms are used unnaturally before nominal clauses or nouns in Cuban Spanish: *mi favorita canción* < *my favorite song*, *la Suprema Corte* < *the Supreme Court*. The second example denotes an amalgamation of loan types: *Corte* < *court* (instead of *Tribunal*), which coincides with a semantic loan in Spanish; syntactic borrowing as to the word-order alteration conveyed; and a pragmatic borrowing in terms of the socio-cultural sense transferred.

Nevertheless, it is precisely ordinal numbers (adjectival function) which are found to be highly abundant. According to Spanish grammar, cardinals (as opposed to ordinals) can only be allotted after nouns: *aula 14*, not *14 aula*; *calle 8*, not *8 calle*. In CAS, there exists a clear tendency of using cardinals before nouns, which is obviously a syntactic *replica* of this sort of English patterning. López Morales (2003, 185s.) has remarked that 77.1% of the cases found on his corpus follow this irregular pattern ("Eso está en la 42 avenida y la 4 calle"; "Es en la 97 avenida y la 64 calle") whereas 10.8% of the cases drop the nominal nucleus to avoid the linguistic incongruence ('Cuando llegues a la 79 y la 18, tienes que doblar a la izquierda'). Curiously, the renowned *Calle 8* in Miami respects Spanish grammar cardinal pattern, possibly because the earliest "emigrés" were not as deeply influenced by English as their descendants.

4.3 Verbs

One of the most outstanding features of verbal peculiarities of Cuban-American Spanish is the formation of denominal verbs. These fresher verb forms are commonly found in infinitives by attaching *-ar*, or *-ear*,[8] to their bases: *aspectar* < *aspect*, *banquear* < *bank*, *candidatear* < *candidate*, *colisionar* < *collision*, *estilear* < *style*, *fuletearse* < *full stop*, *turistear* < *tourist*, *londrear* < *laundry*. However, a vast majority of these verbs are found to be borrowed directly from English verbs (cf. Varela 1992, 105–108): *asquear* < *to ask* (also a semantic loan), *blinkear* < *to blink*, *craquear* < *to crack*, *discusear* < *to discuss*, *flonquear* < *to flunk*, *layar* < *to lie*, *ploguear* < *to plug*, *sendar* < *to sign*, *taimear* < *to time*, *trimear* < *to trim*, *yogar* < *to jog*.

8 This ending is generally pronounced /*iar*/ in both Cuban Spanish and Cuban-American Spanish.

The graphemic variations these verb forms undergo occasionally lead to the processes of semantic loaning and polysemy. Thus, the newly-coined words are already-existing in Spanish with a different meaning: *alocar* < *allocate* (also, 'to become mad'), *culear* < *to cool* (also, 'to move the buttocks when dancing'), *insular* < *to insulate* (also, 'related to an island'), *lisear* /lisiar/ < *to lease* (also, 'to cause someone to get hurt'), *vacunar* < *to vacuum* (also, 'to get vaccinated').

Determining which form (*-ar* or *-ear*) is to be used seems rather imprecise. As expected, most Spanish-induced borrowings tend to adopt the *-ear* ending, which is why some verbs ending in *-ar* are changed into *–ear* forms in certain sociolects (*apedrar* → *apedrear* 'to stone', *besucar* → *besuquear* 'to kiss', *campar* → *campear* 'to camp'). This *-ear* inflectional preference results in the existence of verb duplets having both endings: *lonchar*/*lonchear* 'to have lunch', *machar*/*machear* 'to match', *vacunar*/*vacunear* 'to vacuum'.

4.4 Adverbs

Cuban-American adverbs ending in *-mente* are the resulting construct of adjectival borrowing. Therefore, these forms are indirectly loaned: *conservativamente* < *conservatively*, *controversialmente* < *controversially* instead of *conservadoramente* and *controvertidamente* respectively.

It is the use of the form *para atrás*, however, which abounds in Cuban-American Spanish adverbial forms, especially after verbs whose English equivalent has the particle *back*: *llamar para atrás* < *to call back*, *pagar para atrás* < *to pay back*, *llevar para atrás* < *to take back*. This calque has become particularly spread out in other variants of Spanish, not only in the United States but also in other nearby countries such as Mexico or Cuba. The assimilation of this adverb is the clearest illustration of the influence of Cuban-American Spanish on standard Cuban Spanish.

5 Syntactic borrowing

This type of borrowing is not as visible as loanwords for bilingual speakers of English and Spanish. The fact that they are exposed to English, Spanish, and certain interlinguistic patterns makes it hard to distinguish their normative codes. What seems attention-grabbing is that code-switching tends to occur repeatedly at particular points in conversations, and conversely, it is unnatural at other "specific junctures in discourse" (cf. Sankoff/Poplack 1981). These authors intro-

duce the concepts of *Free Morpheme Constraint* and *Equivalence Constraint*. The former excludes the combination of morphemes and states that "a switch may indeed take place at any point within a particular discourse at which it is possible to make a surface constituent cut and still maintain a free morpheme" (Rothman/Rell 2005, 523s.). Two examples might convey the ungrammatical nature of their constituents: *Estamos talk-ando* and *Al llegar*, *me di cuenta que ellos estaban leave-iendo*.

The "Equivalence Constraint" concept explains how codes will vary at certain points where the surface structures of the languages map onto each other, whereby sentences conveying the meaning of 'I gave him/to him the present' are unacceptable: I gave *le un regalo*; *Le* I gave *un regalo*; Him/to him *di un regalo*; *Di* him/to him *un regalo* (cf. ib.). These constraints might shed some light on how syntactic borrowings in code-switching languages are also characterized by morpho-syntactic constraints. The unacceptance, or ungrammaticality, of some of these transferences guarantees the orderly borrowing of linguistic features.

An interesting finding in Miami-based Spanish is that the forms of verb 'to be' in Spanish *ser* and *estar* are not as puzzling as in other regions of the US, in which the form *estar* is syntactically taking over. López Morales (2003, 181) has confirmed 'the structural strength' of standard Spanish *ser* and *estar* in Miami variant through the analysis of his corpus, in which only four cases were attested:

"Tú eres [estás] muy orgullosa de esta ciudad"
"Ella es [está] orgullosa de ser hispana"
"Yo soy [estoy] bien orgulloso de mi cultura"
"Yo estaba [era] mayor que ellos"

These cases were produced by bilingual migrants who arrived in the US at the age of 6 or under, which might reveal the level of syntactic penetration these individuals are exposed to. However, certain copulative utterances: *estar con hambre*, *estar con sed*, *estar con dolor* are preferred in CAS due to the nearness to English forms: *to be hungry*, *to be thirsty*, *to be hurt*. The aforementioned "nearness" is strictly related to pragmatic features of the speaker: geographical region, age, degree of bilingualism (see Fig. 1 above), etc.

An anomalous syntactic construct in Cuban-American Spanish is the use of gerunds with nominal function; instead, Spanish tends to use an infinitive form: "Jugando tennis [jugar al tenis] es un deporte fuerte" or "Me sentí con mucha tristeza de trabajando [trabajar] con ese tipo de población" (López Morales 2003, 182). The adoption of English syntactic functionality is reasonably determined by coincidental lexical units, such as gerunds (*trabajando*, *jugando*), whereby only grammatical meanings are transferred. Therefore, we could also assume that

these loaned units also undergo a semantic variation of their grammatical description.

Prepositional phrases are surely the most highly relevant features of syntactic borrowing due to their variety of forms in both languages, and their peculiar linkage to verb forms. An array of examples can be found: 'Yo suelo/acostumbro a [preposition is not needed] ir al mall los sábados' < *to be used/accustomed to*, 'Ella siempre está en [a] dieta' < *to be on a diet*, 'No conozco [preposition *a* should be used] tu madre' < *to know someone*.

Varela (1992, 121–124) groups these preposition-related syntactic variations into three main groups. The English paronym is indicated, as well as the adequate expression in standard Spanish, which is specified in parenthesis:

a. Replacement of prepositions:
   - *pensar de* < *think of* (pensar *en*)
   - *soñar de* < *dream of* (soñar *con*)
   - *enamorarse con* < *fall in love* with (enamorarse *de*)
   - *consistir de* < *consist of* (consistir *en*)
   - *trabajar por* cinco años < *work for five years* (trabajar *durante* cinco años)
b. Omission of prepositions:
   - *traficar Ø cocaína* < *traffick Ø cocaine* (traficar *con* cocaína)
   - *disfrutar Ø las vacaciones* < *enjoy Ø holidays* (disfrutar *de* las vacaciones)
c. Addition of prepositions:
   - *buscar por las llaves* < look *for the keys* (buscar Ø las llaves)
   - *esperar por* la guagua < wait *for* the bus (esperar Ø la guagua)

These verb-centered borrowings are all characterized by calquing their equivalent expressions in English. The expressions, though clashing to any Spanish speakers, denote a clear assimilation process of new syntactic functions of prepositions and their corresponding verb forms.

When referring to syntactic borrowing, it is absolutely necessary to refer to the concept of *code-switching*, and its underlying alternating occurrences of two linguistic codes in contact. A number of scholars have studied the singularities of these occurrences, and how syntactically symmetrical they can be (cf. Sankoff/Poplack 1980; Poplack 1981; Woolford 1983). The existence of a fresher intralinguistic code, or third grammar, is entirely justified because communication lacks "pauses, hesitations, repetitions, corrections, or any other interruption or disruption in the rhythm of speech" (Sankoff/Poplack 1981, 11).

According to the typology established by Poplack (1983), and the corpus-driven examples provided by López Morales (2003), Miami-based syntactic switching, or alternations, can be classified as follows:

1. Label-type change: *Oh, my God!* These "labels", syntactically disconnected from the sentence, can be moved discretely within the utterance. Changing syntactic positions does not alter any grammatical rules.
2. Sentence change: "Yo no pongo la radio para no oír a ese hombre. *I don't like that*". This type of change obviously requires a higher degree of bilingualism to produce both types of syntactically coherent sentences.
3. Intra-sentence change: "Si, pero *at the same time*, es bueno, cariñoso; *that's very nice* ¿tú sabes?". Speakers of utterances of this kind are fully exposed to both linguistic codes, especially because those alternations occur in specific sections within the utterance. The idea of finding the syntactic distribution of these code-switching "points" (Poplack 1983) confirms the grammaticality and syntactic symmetry of the resulting interlinguistic code.

This typology is chiefly related to the level of bilingualism speakers are thought to possess. Therefore, it is possible to find a mix of these three types, and presumably the degree of exposure to English is predicted through the syntactic switching conveyed in the utterances. Cuban-Americans, especially those S_e (see Fig. 1), merely resort to label-type changes, whereas SE speakers can express in any of them.

Another type of code-switching is easily spotted in the Cuban-American variant of Spanish: *discourse markers*. These forms, like label-type units, could be placed in different parts of the utterance, depending on the communicative function: *well*, *right?*, *you know?*, *actually*, *by the way* (López Morales 2003, 196).

Nevertheless, interjections are highly visible in any type of Cuban-American speakers, regardless of the level of English (Varela 1992, 127s.). Imported Cuban interjections, such as *¡Ay!* (pain, suffering), *¡Ah!* (surprise), coexist with assimilated English ones like *¡Auch!* < *Ouch!*, *¡Guao!* < *Wow!* respectively. Likewise, greetings and farewell phrases, i.e. *oye*, *hola*, *adiós*, *hasta luego*, *adiosito* have been mostly replaced by the existing anglicized counterparts: *¡Ey!*, *¡Hi!*, or *¡Bye!*.

6 Sociocultural and Pragmatic Uniqueness of CAS

One of the most outstanding features of CAS is precisely the coinage of US-based Cuban idioms. These indigenous multiword phrases, as opposed to other resulting forms of contact language units in North-American territory, convey cultural deep-rooted-*ness*. The well-established Cuban-American community, especially in Miami-Dade area, has led to a palpable phrase stock, which is characterized by the mélange of imported Cuban traits and the assimilation of American socio-

linguistic structures. Thus, these idioms both represent an effective tool to keep biculturality working, and suggest the distinctiveness of this social group.

To study these idioms more globally, a compilation of these units has been carried out. Two main sources have been taken into consideration: *Diccionario mayor de cubanismos* (Sánchez-Boudy 1999) and *Diccionario del español de Cuba* (Haensch/Reinhold 2003). The glossary solely consists of indigenous CAS idioms, or *cubanisms*, which have originated or used among the emigrés in the US. A total of 338 multiword units have been attested, 282 (83.4%) of which are linguistically induced by American English, i.e. at least one of its constituents is of English origin. These figures reveal a predictable fact: US-based multiword phrases, or *cubanisms*, are the product of anglicized creativity, driven by an inherent sense of *cubanía*.[9]

Hilarity is surely an influential factor: *tener a alguien como en el armi* 'to keep someone under strict control' < *army*, *tener un beikeri* 'to caress someone' < *bakery*, *tener en la cabeza un fertilaiser* 'to have a haircut too often' < *fertilizer*, *llevar a ver el chutol* 'to give away something nice' < *shuttle*. These multiword units convey a metaphorical transference of *army*, *bakery*, *fertilizer*, and *shuttle*, which add humor to the idiomaticity. Hilarity resorts to code-switching: the corresponding Spanish equivalents (*ejército*, *dulcería*, *fertilizante* and *transbordador*) would not have the same effect.

Eponymy- or toponymy-based coinages are probably the scarcest types of cubanisms found. They are fundamentally referential, and their allusions to American places or personalities show differentiating cultural features: *to be like bili grajam* 'to buy or get things that are not needed' < *Billy Graham*, *tener un evergleid en la barriga* 'to have abdominal noises' < *Everglades*, *ser un cheo de jaialia* 'not to be fashionable' < *Hialeah*, *ser el drácula del sausgües* 'to be really cunning'< *Southwest*, *ser orfan ani* 'to complain a lot over his/her life' < *Orphan Annie*, *ser de Indianápolis* 'to resemble a native American', *ser peor que yimi carter* 'to be useless' < *Jimmy Carter*. Unlike CAS, these expressions are not relevant in Cuba as their referents are not identified.

As expected, those coinages based on generic trademark are highly frequent. Like eponyms and toponyms, their meanings are not easily discernible by Spanish-speaking islanders. However, they do convey a complex metonymic process, which results in creative idioms: *tener pasión por la florida pauer* 'to leave the lights on all night' < *Florida Power*, *ser míster clínex* 'to cry heavily' < *Kleenex*, *ser un metroreil* 'not to keep someone's word' < *Metrorail*, *alborotarse a lo macdonal* 'to make a fuss' < *MacDonald*, *estar más clin que míster clin* 'to be really clean' <

9 Cuban-ness.

Mister Clean, *publicar algo en el globo de la gud yiar* 'to spread the word' < *Good Year*, *ser durasel* 'not to age' < *Duracell*, *alquilar a unjemaima* 'to pay for catering service' < *Aunt Jemima*.

Interestingly, some elements are semantically calqued: *papayón* < *Papa John's*, *yuca* < *Y.U.C.A.* (Young Upper Cuban American), *los jiménez* < *G-Men* (FBI officers), *cuqueo* < *to cook*. In Cuban Spanish, *papayón* is slang for the female reproductive organs, *yuca* is *cassava* in Spanish, *Jiménez* is a typical Spanish last name, and *cuqueo* means the act of mortifying someone. These paronyms are phonologically related, which might explain why they have been coined and assimilated.

Though not necessarily English-induced, a number of expressions have been identified as pragmatically relevant, particularly because their coinage is related to the establishing of Cuban-American communities in the US: *estar vestido de refugio* 'to be old-fashioned' < *el Refugio* was a reach-out place in Miami, which served to welcome newcomers; *ser algo peor que la embajada del Perú* 'to be in dire straits' < *Embajada del Perú*;[10] *ser marielito en el trabajo* 'to be really lazy' < *Mariel* (see section 2).

7 Conclusion

This empirical study has shown that CAS is not merely a dialectal construct of code-switching and bilingualism. It does denote a complex process of shifting historical and sociological traits, in which the long-established Cuban community, especially in south Florida, plays a fundamental role. As per speaker-related features, CAS is characterized by clear generational differences and a strong sense of bi-cultural identity, which explains why Cuban-Americans in Miami have been more inclined to differentiating rather than assimilating. Thus, borrowing newer cultural, social and linguistic American codes in a well-established Cuban community reveals the uniqueness of CAS.

Spanish is unprecedentedly far more common than English in Miami-Dade, which discloses a deep-rooted permeability of Cuban Spanish in the region. The fact that a number of Cuban non-English speakers persist, and that numerous loanwords and cultural borrowings have been resorted to in order to comply with necessary bilingual context, have led to a clear-cut intralinguistic code-switching process. In other words, CAS is the reflection of the variability of Spanglish within

10 On April 4, 1980 over ten thousand Cubans occupied the Peruvian embassy in Havana in an attempt to flee the country.

a specific region in the US. Though a number of linguistic coincidences have been attested, CAS echoes the characteristics of Cuban-American speakers, i.e. age, origin, cultural attainment, etc. This is precisely what makes American Spanglish more susceptible to changing and inconsistency.

In terms of age and origin, a US-bred Cuban speaker is more inclined to bilingualism, and their Spanish is characterized by a higher level of linguistic assimilation. On the other hand, non-English-speaking Cuban-Americans chiefly resort to adapted loanwords or calques to facilitate their social and parental communication. Cubonics reveals that linguistic permeability is also taking place in reverse, especially among English-speaking Cuban-Americans: *to be finishing* 'to be a big success' < *estar acabando*. One of the most relevant findings shows that these calqued utterances rely on their cultural contribution.

The elaboration of a brief glossary of US-based multiword units has revealed that pragmatics and sociolinguistic features of the social group leads to code-switching and hybrid coinages. These forms are characterized by having undergone an array of pragma-semantic: hilarity, toponymy, eponymy, generic trademark, etc. The uniqueness of CAS idioms relies on the fact that they tend to assimilate English codes and cultural loans, but stylistically these units resort to Cuban cultural elements, in keeping with a bi-cultural tendency that has been part of south Florida communities for over sixty years.

This analysis has revealed that linguistic borrowing has been identified in all the levels examined, i.e. phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic and semantic. These variations, being entirely described and illustrated, entail a significant and indispensable connection with pragmatic traits, i.e. geographical location, age, schooling, among others. The resulting loans are reliant on a wide range of extralinguistic factors, which involves numerous and gradable rituals or patterns of CAS. This account does not deny the existence of primary lexico-syntactic formulas, but their usage and convention are necessarily socially conditioned.

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